

HEY VIKTOR



2023 / Canada / 102 mins

[Press Materials](#)

Directed/Written by Cody Lightning

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Director's Statement:

Hey Viktor! is the story of a former child actor, who desperately wants to make the movie of his life.

It's the story of a man who so badly wants to live up to the image he's created of himself, he's willing to burn the whole thing down to get there, and his character is remolded in the fire.

And it's 100% honest. How do I know?.....

CAUSE I'M VIKTOR, BABY!!

When I was growing up, I remember watching all of the big "Native" movies & thinking—"Man, I had no idea Kevin Costner was in the band!!"

Smoke Signals was the first movie where I saw myself on the screen. I want to bring that joy to a new generation.

I want to show off the Rez that I know—
the raunchy humor,
the goofy characters,
the love and redemption.

It's like my Dad always says— when you've got fuck all from fuck all, you're still gonna have fuck all.

So you gotta try something.

- Cody Lightning

Background:

In 1998, *Smoke Signals* changed indigenous cinema forever. For once, there was a movie that was actually about Indians being Indians -- not just getting shot by cowboys. It won the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance and has become the most memed piece of Indigenous media ever.

It was also *Smoke Signals* that launched the career of child star Cody Lightning, or Little Viktor, as you may know him. The movie earned him literally dozens of fans, and at least a couple hundred bucks. To this day, he is recognizable on every Reserve by the film's most famous line: 'Hey Viktor!'

Link To Stills:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/351gbyxsyno951x/AACDUKX6IF3I0RHESmQdASyla?dl=0>

Photo credit: Lightning Mill Inc.

Short Synopsis:

Twenty years removed from childhood fame as Little Viktor in 1998's *Smoke Signals*, CODY LIGHTNING has been forced to move home to his reserve in northern Alberta. He still believes himself to be famous— even though the only parts he gets these days are porn & fracking commercials.

But when Cody learns his wife and kids are leaving him for a younger, more successful actor, he decides it's time to quit fucking around and make his masterpiece— writing, directing, & starring in *SMOKE SIGNALS 2: STILL SMOKING*.

A documentary crew follows Cody on his journey around the Indigenous world— re-uniting the original cast, borrowing money from arms dealers, & realizing his vision... just in time to realize his vision was shit.

Long Synopsis:

HEY VIKTOR! is the story of once-famous child actor Cody Lightning, best known as Little Viktor from 1998 cult classic *Smoke Signals*.

Twenty years later, Cody's been forced to move home to Enoch, keeping himself afloat with fracking commercials and pornography jobs. However, he still believes himself to be famous, recognized across the reserve by a familiar phrase— "*Hey Viktor!*" His best friend and manager, KATE (Hannah Cheesman), has followed him back up to Canada, but it's clear her patience for Cody's antics is running thin.

When a documentary crew asks to follow him, he thinks his star has finally risen again. But while the cameras are rolling, Cody's baby mama blindsides him with the news that she's taking their kids to the States, to live with a much sexier, more successful actor. Cody goes on a drunken bender, and the documentary crew intervenes. They're not making a documentary on his career— they're from a TV show called *Gettin Sober with Craig*

Broner, called to help Cody get sober. Instead of agreeing to do the show, however, Cody hires the documentary crew out from under the host, and decides to finally make his masterpiece: *SMOKE SIGNALS 2: STILL SMOKING*.

The camera crew continues with Cody on his incredible journey. After struggling to raise funds, his first break comes when he meets CHOMSKY (Phil Burke), a German arms dealer and *Smoke Signals* super-fan, who agrees to finance the film, as long as Cody can reunite the original cast. Cody tracks down the original cast, but GARY FARMER's too famous, and IRENE BEDARD's gonna need a fat paycheck. Unable to locate ADAM BEACH, he breaks into his mansion home to steal the wig from *Smoke Signals*, and is arrested.

Finally, SIMON BAKER, or Little Thomas, agrees to join the project, but not without a fight: Simon reveals that it was Cody who ruined his career in the first place, but Cody convinces him: a film would make the superstars again.

While shooting the film goes surprisingly well at first, Cody's self-obsession begins to threaten everything. His insistence on doing things exactly like the original film, and jealousy of the attention Simon is receiving, cause him to become a tyrant. A violent disagreement with Simon causes the cast and crew to quit, so Cody pushes on alone. He screens the film for the first time at Land Back Film Festival, and the screening devolves into a riot. Cody blames Kate, and she leaves him, revealing that she called the Intervention.

At his lowest moment, he's visited by a vision of ADAM BEACH (played by Adam himself), in the form of a blackjack dealer, who reminds him: sometimes, you've gotta know when to quit betting on yourself, and bet on the people around you.

With no time and no resources, it's up to Cody to stitch up his old relationships, show up for the people he let down, and bet on his friends to help him finish the film.

He screens a new cut of the film at the Enoch Youth Center, directed by Simon, with a very different ending, and realizes— he was never the star of the movie, and the most important part of anyone's story is never the back-story.

LEAD CAST

Cody Lightning / Director, Co-writer & Cody



CODY LIGHTNING is a world-class, generation-defining actor, iconic for his performance as Little Viktor in 1998's *SMOKE SIGNALS*.

Hailing from Samson Cree Nation in Maskwacis, Alberta, Canada, Cody began acting at age 5 in the film *Geronimo*. Since, he has become one of Hollywood's most active Indigenous actors, best known for his roles in *Smoke Signals*, Johnny Depp's directorial debut *The Brave*, Rian Johnson's *Brick*, and many, many more.

In 2023, Cody will star in Marvel's upcoming *ECHO* series.

In recent years, Lightning has taken on greater creative responsibilities, including producing, directing, and writing, focusing on projects that highlight how fucking hilarious Indigenous people are.

Hannah Cheesman / Kate



Hannah is an actress, writer and director based in Toronto & LA. A TIFF Emerging Canadian Filmmaker, recent acting credits include *Schitt's Creek* (guest star) and *Star Trek: Discovery* (recurring guest star). Most recently, Hannah sold her show half hour dark comedy, *Badger*, to Apple TV+. She is also working alongside Lulu Wang & Dani Melia of *Local Time* (*The Farewell*, *Expats*) to produce her next feature, *Succor*, based on her short film of the same name (TIFF, Vimeo Staff Pick).

She has written on *Workin' Moms* (Netflix) and *Find me in Paris* (Hulu), and has directed features and shorts that have shown at Cannes, Tiff and Palm Springs, winning Best Feature Thriller (San Diego IFF) and Feature Film Grand Prize (Rhode Island).

Simon Baker / Simon



Simon Baker grew up on screen. From his first project at the age of 9 *Once in a Blue Moon*. Constantly working in the industry throughout his life, he has worked on some of the most iconic Indigenous projects that blazed the trail and set the bar high.

Such as the feature *Smoke Signals*, or the series *North of 60* to recent work in Scotland on the *Outlander* series to the lead role opposite Adam Beach in the Alberta shot feature, *Birds Who Fear Death*.

He has played leading roles all over North America in numerous projects with Directors such as Ron Howard and Atom Egoyan. He has worked alongside actors such as Cate Blanchett, Tommy Lee Jones, Josh Brolin, Will Smith, Graham Greene, Sam Heughan among others. Recent years he has been shooting the APTN series, *Native Planet* where he has travelled the world chronicling the indigenous story on every continent.

ADDITIONAL CAST

Phil Burke as Chomsky
Conway Kootenay as Reggie
with **Gary Farmer** as Gary
Irene Bedard as Irene
and **Adam Beach** as Adam
featuring **Colin Mochrie** as Craig Broner

PRODUCING TEAM

Samuel Miller / Co-writer, Executive Producer

Samuel is a novelist & screenwriter, based in Los Angeles. His most recent novel, **REDEMPTION PREP** (Harper- Collins, April 2020) was a New York Times & Indie Bestseller. It is in development for television at MGM TV.

His debut, **A LITE TOO BRIGHT** (Harper-Collins, May 2018), released to critical acclaim & has been translated into eight languages & released in twenty countries. Kirkus called it a "*fresh incarnation of the great American road trip novel... bursting with big ideas, enigmas, poetry, and flashes of humor.*"

His first feature film as a writer/producer, **HEY VIKTOR!**, was produced with the support of Telefilm Canada and will premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Samuel grew up the son of a pastor & teacher in Vermillion, South Dakota. He toured for six years in the rock band Paradise Fears. In addition to writing, he has directed major label music videos, & attended the University of Southern California's MFA program in Film & Television Production.

Joshua M. Jackson / Producer

Joshua Jackson is the co-owner of Lightning Mill Inc, and the lead producer of **HEY VIKTOR!**

A member of Enoch Cree Nation in Edmonton, Joshua is an experienced theatre producer, having premiered multiple shows at Edmonton's Citadel Theatre. In recent years, he has produced several music videos for popular artist Lostboycrew. He is the founder of the Soar Aboriginal Arts Program, a multi-disciplinary training program for indigenous youth.

Sara Corry / Producer

Sara Corry is an independent Canadian Producer & freelancer whose recent credits include: MGM+, Crown Media, FX, Netflix and Polyscope Productions. Alongside this work, Corry is also a long standing member of [North Country Cinema](#) having produced multiple, award-winning features including: *The Valley Below* (2014), *Range Roads* (2021) and *Alberta Number One* (2023). These films have screened at festivals across North America including TIFF and the Austin Film Festival. Most recently, alongside producing partner Kyle Thomas, Corry served as lead producer on the Indigenous dark-comedy *Hey Viktor!* which will be having its world premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival in June 2023.

Kyle Thomas / Producer

Kyle is a Canadian filmmaker and producer, and an alum of the Mel Hoppenheim School of Cinema at Concordia University in Montreal. His award-winning short film *Not Far From The Abattoir* (2011) screened at the Cannes Market as well as in competition at SXSW 2012.

Thomas is a founding member of [North Country Cinema](#), a Canadian production company and has produced four feature films: *The Valley Below* (2014), *O Brazen Age* (2015), *Range Roads* (2021) and *Alberta Number One* (2023).

Kyle's first feature as a writer/director, *The Valley Below*, had its World Premiere at the TIFF in 2014 and went on to garner 2 Canadian Screen Award nominations in 2015. In 2021, Thomas completed his second feature film, *Range Roads*, which screened at multiple festivals including the Austin Film Festival, Cinequest and was the closing night film at the Canadian Film Festival.

Most recently, Thomas served as lead producer on the Indigenous dark-comedy *Hey Viktor!* which is set to have its world premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival in June 2023.

CREW LIST

Director **Cody Lightning**
Writers **Cody Lightning, Samuel Miller**
Producer **Joshua M. Jackson**
Producers **Sara Corry, Kyle Thomas**
Producer **Blake McWilliam**

Executive producer **Blackhorse Lowe**
Executive producer **Samuel Miller**

Associate producer **Eric Janvier**
Associate producer **Simon Baker**

Cinematography **Liam Mitchell**
Production design **Megan Koshka**
Costume design **Cherie Howard**
Casting **Beans & Eisenberg Casting**
Editing **Sarah Taylor**
Music **Matthew Cardinal**

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